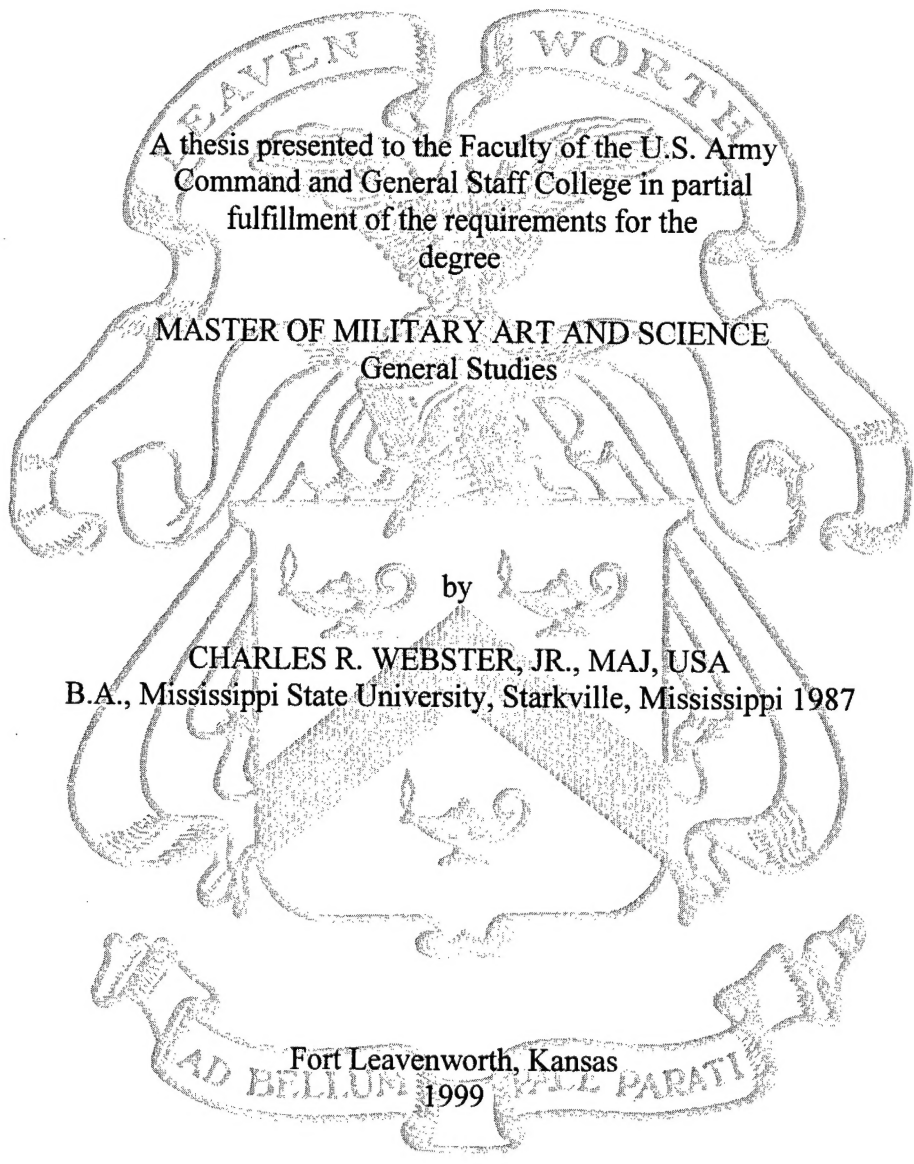


OFFICER PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM XXI
KNOWLEDGE ACCOUNTABILITY: IMPROVING
COMPANY COMMANDERS



A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

CHARLES R. WEBSTER, JR., MAJ, USA
B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi 1987

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1999

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE 4 June 1999	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis, 7 Aug 98 - 4 Jun 99	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Officer Professional Management System XXI Knowledge Accountability: Improving Company Commanders			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) MAJ Charles R. Webster Jr., U.S. Army				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Graduate Degree Programs 1 Reynolds Avenue, Bell Hall, Room 123 Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1352			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A	
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) This study examines how the Army's Officer Professional Management System (OPMS) develops and manages company commanders. It examines the development of OPMS XXI, the officer professional development system for the twenty-first century, its purpose, and focus; how this system ensures company grade officers acquire the knowledge, skills, and attributes required to command at the company level and how this system can be improved to ensure the captains commanding the Army's companies are trained and prepared to meet the challenges of today and in the future. Through a content analysis of literature, exercise and operational trends, and doctrinal and regulatory requirements, this thesis determines where OPMS XXI falls short and suggests areas for improvement. The analysis revealed that OPMS XXI, specifically its career field-based management system, is focused on the development of the field-grade officer operational and functional area specialist and not on tactically and technically proficient company-grade officers. Yet the foundation of the career field-base management system rests on company grade officers fully developed in the technical and tactical aspects of warfighting. It is recommended that a system be developed and implemented to ensure company grade officers prior to assuming command of a company-sized unit and designation of company grade branch qualification meet specific, quantifiable requirements.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS After Action Review, Army Lessons Learned, Combat Training Center, Officer Personnel Management System, OPMS XXI, Company Commanders			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 84	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UNLIMITED	

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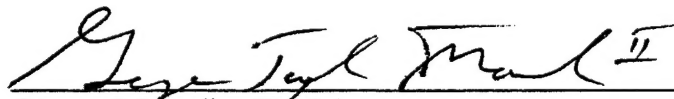
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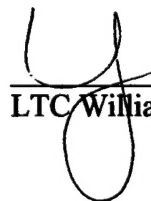
Name of Candidate: MAJ Charles R. Webster, Jr.

Thesis Title: Officer Personnel Management System XXI Knowledge Accountability:
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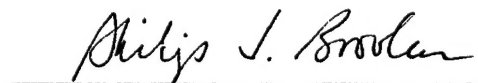
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

OFFICER PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM XXI KNOWLEDGE
ACCOUNTABILITY: IMPROVING COMPANY COMMANDERS by MAJ Charles R.
Webster, JR., USA, 74 pages.

This study examines how the Army's Officer Professional Management System (OPMS) develops and manages company commanders. It examines the development of OPMS XXI, the officer professional development system for the 21st Century, its purpose, and focus; how this system ensures company grade officers acquire the knowledge, skills, and attributes required to command at the company level and how this system can be improved to ensure the captains commanding the Army's companies are trained and prepared to meet the challenges of today and in the future. Through a content analysis of literature, exercise and operational trends, and doctrinal and regulatory requirements, this thesis determines where OPMS XXI falls short and suggests areas for improvement.

The analysis revealed that OPMS XXI, specifically its career field-based management system, is focused on the development of the field-grade officer operational and functional area specialist and not on tactically and technically proficient company-grade officers. Yet the foundation of the career field-base management system rests on company grade officers fully developed in the technical and tactical aspects of warfighting. It is recommended that a system be developed and implemented to ensure company-grade officers prior to assuming command of a company-sized unit and designation of company-grade branch qualification meet specific, quantifiable requirements.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my wife, Caroline, and kids, Jennifer, Nicholas, and Jack, for their support during the nine months it took to complete this thesis. Caroline provided me the encouragement and support that I desperately needed everyday without a complaint. This project is as much hers as it is mine. Jennifer provided me the motivation to complete the project so I could play soccer with her, and the boys, Nick and Jack, always provided joyful distractions to just break away and clear my head.

I wish to acknowledge my thesis committee, Dr. Lon Seglie, Mr. George Mordica, and LTC Bill Bryan. Each provided the guidance and friendship I needed to complete this project. Without their support, skill, and patience the work would have never been completed. I thank them sincerely for their assistance.

Additionally, I thank the wonderful and helpful ladies of the CGSC Graduate Degree Program, Ms. Helen Davis and Mrs. Karin Brightwell. Their support, expert advice, and professionalism contributed greatly to my "MMAS" experience.

Finally, I would like to thank my classmates who provided encouragement, camaraderie, and an "alternate view" throughout the course. Good luck to each of you and thanks.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAR	After Action Review
AEF	Army Expeditionary Force
AGFHQ	Army Ground Forces Headquarters
ALLS	Army Lessons Learned System
AR	Army Regulation
CAAT	Combined Arms Assessment Team
CALL	Center for Army Lessons Learned
CTC	Combat Training Center
FM	Field Manual
G3/S3	Operations Officer
JRTC	Joint Readiness Training Center
MACOM	Major Army Command
NTC	National Training Center
O/C	Observer-Controller
SME	Subject Matter Expert
TTP	Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
TC	Training Circular
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
WALLP	Wartime Army Lessons Learned Program

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the decline of the former Soviet Union in 1991, the U.S. Army has decreased in size from eighteen active divisions to ten active divisions. During this time, the U.S. Army has conducted over thirty-six operational deployments. Compared to the sixteen operational deployments conducted by the army between 1945 and 1988. The increase in operational deployments combined with the decrease of forces available to execute them has increased the requirement for soldiers and their leaders to be trained and ready at all times. The requirement to be *trained*, having the required knowledge and experience required to execute your duties, and *ready*, prepared to deploy as a unit or as an individual at any time and execute the duties and tasks assigned, places considerable demands on the Army's lowest tactical commander, the company commander. Company commanders, typically junior captains serving their second tour in the Army, are responsible for every soldier in the U.S. Army. A company commander is the first level of commander who has the authority to promote, demote, award and discipline. A company commander is the most important commissioned officer in an enlisted soldier's life. A company commander is the first significant leader a new commissioned officer comes in contact with and the leader that will influence a new officer's perception of the Army. The ability to train soldiers and units and positively influence junior officers is developed through the U.S. Army's Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management System (OPMS). Yet, OPMS XXI, the latest revision to the Army's officer development and management system is focused on not preparing company grade officers to lead company level units,

but to become "qualified" to serve on higher level staffs or in positions other than tactical leadership positions.

The following vignette illustrates a few of the complex issues that may face a company commander during operations conducted by the Army today and the future. Many of these issues are not new. Company commanders throughout the history of our Army have faced many of the same problems.

The Realities of Company Command

Dawn broke over the Island of Aragon as an officer; an U.S. Army captain and company commander, made his way across the Mississippi River Bridge. The bridge marked the Zone of Separation (ZOS) between the country of the Peoples Democratic Republic of Atlantica (PDRA) and the Republic of Cortina (ROC) (JRTC 1997). It represents one of the three United Nations controlled crossing sites between the two Former Warring Nations (FWN) and is this company commander's responsibility.

The commander reflected on how far he had come in the last year-in-a-half. Eighteen months ago he had been a light infantry, first-lieutenant platoon leader in charge of twenty-one soldiers. His platoon had an authorized strength of thirty-four soldiers but due to the Army-wide shortage of infantrymen, rarely accounted for more than twenty or twenty-one. His responsibilities consisted primarily of ensuring his platoon was present for physical training each morning and for whatever training his company commander had planned that day. He was now in command of a mechanized infantry company comprising 102 soldiers and 4 other officers. Within his company he controlled fourteen Bradley Fighting Vehicles, two utility 1-¼-ton vehicles and two 2-½-ton cargo trucks as well as the assorted crew-served and individual weapons for each man and system. A far

cry from the twenty-one light infantrymen with their individual weapons he controlled just over a year ago.

Ten of the past eighteen months he had spent attending the Captains Career Course (CCC), which included the Officers Advance Course (OAC) and the Combined Arms Service Staff School (CAS3). He also attended the Bradley Commanders Course (BCC) prior to reporting to his new unit. OAC attempted to bridge the tactical concepts of company level operations and battalion/brigade level operations. CAS3 focused on staff procedures at the battalion, brigade, and divisional level. The BCC provided an overview of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle to senior noncommissioned officers and company grade officers who had not served in a mechanized unit. OAC provided a sound understanding of tactical operations at the battalion and brigade level but did not address, to the level of detail he felt necessary, the requirements and responsibilities of a company level commander. Areas, such as logistics, administrative procedures, military justice, human relations, and the enlisted management system, are paramount to his ability to command but were not addressed in detail in any of his institutional schools. This lack of knowledge concerned him, but he had no guidance or direction on how to correct his shortcomings.

He received his promotion to captain at the end of CAS3 at four years time-in-service rather than the normal four and one-half year mark. The early promotion came from an Army shortage of captains. A shortage caused by the Army's demand for branch qualified captains. Branch qualification for a captain defined as one who has successfully completed company level command. This demand for branch qualified captains placed him in command of a mechanized infantry company two months ago - six months after

arriving at his new duty station--with the intent of moving him out of command after twelve months to fill a higher priority position required by the Army. His company, part of Joint Task Force Falcon (JTFF) deployed shortly after he assumed command.

JTFF formed during the mid-1990s to maintain the peace between the PDRA and the ROC. The peace earned by United Nations (UN) combat intervention in the late 1980s and early 1990s (JRTC 1997). His company, fulfilling a rotating tasking within the division, deployed separately from its parent battalion located at Fort Stewart, Georgia. Its mission consisted of protecting the bridge and monitoring the movements of PDRA citizens between Atlantica and disputed territory within Cortina. As the commander of a separate company not affiliated with the divisional headquarters or other units in country, he reported directly to the JTF J3, a Marine lieutenant colonel, whom he had met only once.

The thoughts of the last year and one-half passed quickly through the commander's mind as he approached the east end, the Alantican side, of the bridge. He returned to the events, which had materialized within the last twenty-four hours concerning his first sergeant (1SG). His 1SG, a veteran of seventeen years and, at thirty-seven, senior in age to him by ten years had been accused of improper sexual relations with a female soldier attached to his company. A female enlisted soldier within his attached Military Police (MP) platoon had approached the commander the night before and accused his 1SG of improper sexual advances and improperly touching her. She threatened to report his 1SG to the JTFF Commander if the company commander did not address the issue and take action. As he approached his guard post, the commander struggled with the dilemma of what to do about his 1SG. He was not clear on which

article of the Uniform Code of Military Justice this issue addressed or of his command relationship and responsibilities of an attached element and the soldiers assigned to that element. Through the predawn light he noticed a large crowd gathering just outside the barriers that marked the boundaries of his area of responsibilities. He was not aware of any demonstrations or activities planned for the day nor had he stopped at the JTFF Headquarters to receive an intelligence update from the intelligence officer.

The young company commander felt a weakness in his legs as he pondered the ramifications of such an accusation against his senior noncommissioned officer. The company commander did not know what to do. He had not discussed this possibility during any of his schools nor had he taken the time to study the UCMJ as it pertained to command relationship. The 1SG, when confronted with the charges, had quickly dismissed the idea and informed the commander that he would handle the soldiers and stop any rumors. He stated that the commander must have misunderstood the MP and that he would "Handle it!" Not wanting to offend his senior noncommissioned officer and not having his battalion commander available for advice--he told the 1SG to keep him informed. Now, as he approached his guard post on the eastern end of the bridge, he did not feel he had taken the correct action.

A large explosion just outside the guard post barriers shattered the commander's thoughts. Debris and fire swept over his head throwing him to the ground. Before he was able to pick himself up and catch his bearings, a news crew descended on him from the direction of the explosion and began to shout questions. The first thoughts that came to the commander's mind was to notify the JTFF tactical operations center, report the explosion, and request guidance. He had only been in country and operationally in

control of the bridge for three weeks. He had not yet run through the rehearsals for different contingencies. He did not know if he had indirect fire support. He had not designated a quick reaction force. He did not know who was threatening his positions. He had the latest information displays mounted in his Bradley fighting vehicle. Each capable of providing real-time information on all friendly and known enemy positions, but he did not know how to operate them. Since being in country he had instead focused on billeting his men and insuring they had material comforts and access to the base camp facilities. This focus based on the recommendation of his ISG and the fact that no U.S. unit had been attacked in the past thirteen months.

He had not been told of a threat of attack to his positions or how to respond to an incident outside his areas of responsibility. He did not understand the command and control relationship between his unit and the other multinational units within the country. Additionally, he had not received any training on media relations and did not know how to handle the news crew. He wished, now, he had stopped by the JTFF operations center to receive an update before he began this morning.

The company commander stood in the first light of the day on a bridge between two former warring nations. Through the smoke and debris from a destroyed guard shack with doubts of the reliability of his senior subordinate he watched and listened to the screams of wounded men and tried to draw from his training, experience, and knowledge and determine what to do. He did not know.

Statement of the Problem

The officer in the preceding example is fictional as are the place and situation. The probability of these events occurring now or in the future to a company commander

in the U.S. Army are high. The commander depicted in this vignette is faced with responsibilities and requirements beyond his level of training and readiness--beyond his level of knowledge. Yet, he is a professional. He has successfully attended and completed all training and schools required of an officer of his grade. He has held all the leadership and developmental positions offered by the Army to an officer of his branch and specialty. He is a product of the system that developed the general officers leading the Army today and the leaders who won the Gulf War in 1991. Why is this commander unprepared? Why doesn't he know what to do?

Do the schools and training offered by the Army prepare its leaders to assume the responsibilities expected of someone of this rank and time in service? Was this officer certified on a set of required knowledge tasks prior to assuming command of a company level unit? Who is responsible to ensure a leader at his level is properly trained and prepared? What has changed within the army to cause the system to produce a company commander that is not prepared? Has the tactical environment changed? Has the tactical requirements changed?

How can the U.S. Army ensure the most experienced and proficient company grade officer's command its companies? This is the practical problem this thesis will attempt to solve. But, in order to answer a practical problem a research problem must be developed. To narrow the focus of this project, this thesis will examine how the Army's officer management and training system can be improved to prepare officers to command at the company level.

Primary and Secondary Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine and recommend changes to the research problem: How can the U.S. Army's Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management System be improved to better prepare company grade officers for command at the company level?

To answer this question the following secondary questions must first be answered:

1. What are the standards and qualifications required for company level command?
2. How does the Army ensure an officer meets the standards and qualifications required for company level command?
3. How does the current system manage and train officers in preparation for company level command?
4. Do company commanders perform to the level expected under the Army's current management and training model?

Assumptions

In answering the primary and secondary questions, I considered the following assumptions.

Captains command U.S. Army company-sized units.

Captain's command after graduating from the Captains Career Course consisting of OAC and CAS3 during their second operational tour of duty. There are examples of first lieutenants commanding companies prior to attending the advance course. These cases are considered exceptions and will not be considered during this study.

An officer commanding a company is, on average, twenty-seven years old and a college graduate and has six years active commissioned time in service. Age and time in service windows vary based on source of commissioning and prior service. These windows affect individual experience levels and capabilities but are not pertinent to a study of the overall system.

The current management practices and training systems for company grade officers are not scheduled for changed by the army.

Definitions

Key terms that clarify the understanding of this study are:

Company. An army unit normally commanded by a captain. (Merriam-Webster 1974) A unit at a command level below a battalion and above a platoon; equivalent to a battery or troop. (CALL Thesaurus)

Commander. An officer commanding an army or a subdivision of an army. (Merriam-Webster 1974)

Company Grade Officer. Army, Air Force, or Marine Corps officers of the rank of second lieutenant through captain who serve at the company level (CALL Thesaurus).

Branch Qualification. An officer qualification identifier designated upon completion of prescribed institutional and operational training.

Significance of the Study

The commander . . . finds himself in a constant whirlpool of false and true information, of mistakes committed through fear, through negligence, through haste; of disregard of his authority, either from mistaken or correct motives . . . of accidents, which no mortal could have foreseen. In short, (the commander) is the victim of a hundred thousand impressions, most of which are intimidating, few of which are encouraging. (Only) by long experience of war, (the commander)

acquires the sensitive perception (necessary) for quickly determining the (true) value of these incidents. (Clausewitz 1976, 117)

Commanders at all levels, especially at the company level, do not have the benefit of “long experience of war” to learn their trade. Future conflicts and wars will be a “come-as-you-are” affair. The commander of a company level unit today will be called upon to make decisions and take action that will affect the interest of the United States. A commander of a company level today will be faced with decisions that affect the safety of his men without the benefit of a more experience commander providing him guidance and direction. Is this situation different than what company commanders of the past have faced? The answer is no. What is different is the U.S. Army’s assumption that company grade officers--captains--are trained and have the knowledge and experience to execute the missions and tasks envisioned by Force XXI--the Army’s vision for the future. That the current officer development and management system, OPMS XXI, provides the skills, knowledge, and attributes expected of junior officers today and in the future. This thesis will examine the current system and determine how the Army can ensure the best-qualified officer is commanding the units at the tip of the bayonet.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of a trained and ready officer corps in the U.S. Army is documented and directed in a number of studies commissioned by the leadership of the Army and within directives and doctrine published by the Army. The subject of leader development has been highlighted further by articles written by leaders in the field, thesis written for the service schools, and trends collected from the Combat Training Centers (CTC).

The review of literature is limited from 1972 to the present base on the inception of the Officer Professional Development System in 1972. The discussions, trends, and issues reviewed are further limited to observations gained from the early 1990s to the present. Additionally, the literature review will focus on the development of company grade officers. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the background for the research effort and support the findings in chapter 4.

Officers are trained and managed under the Officer Professional Management System (OPMS). The OPMS was instituted in 1975 as a result of the U.S. Army War College Study on *Military Professionalism* conducted in 1972 and a follow-on analysis directed by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel in 1974. In 1977 the Chief of Staff, Army, directed a study titled *A Review of the Education and Training of Officers (RETO)*. This study determined officer training and education requirements based on the Army's missions and individual career development needs. He further directed this study recommend training and education policies and procedures from precommissioning through career completion for a resource-constrained environment (*RETO* 1978, 1:1). In

1981 Congress passed the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) which affected the policies and procedures of officer management and training. In 1983 the Army Chief of Staff chartered the *Professional Development of Officer Study (PDOS)* to examine the entire Army education and leader development system to determine the impact of this legislation and make recommendations for officer professional development out to 2025. As a result, OPMS II was developed and instituted in 1984 to accommodate the changes directed by DOPMA. Two years later, the Army the Chief of Staff directed a review of officer leader development to account for the changes in law, policy, and procedures that had occurred since the creation of OPMS II and the implementation of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. This review created the *Leader Development Action Plan (LDAP)* implemented in 1989. Over fifty recommendations representing LDAP and the latest revisions to the officer personnel system were incorporated into the Army's OPMS and published in 1989 as DA PAM 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Utilization*.

DA PAM 600-3 (1989) established five phases of professional development: Precommissioning, Lieutenant, Captain, Major, and Lieutenant Colonel. The Lieutenant Phase and the Captain Phase focused on the development of company grade officers from commissioning through the ninth year of service. During the Lieutenant Phase, officers were expected to complete an Officer Basic Course, complete the requirements of the Military Qualification Standards (MQS) II System, and conduct operational assignments within their basic branch (DA PAM 600-3 1989, 6). Under this system, the basic course provided instruction related to the overall mission and function of the officer's branch along with technical instruction, which provides the detail, knowledge, and required skills

associated with the officer's branch. The MQS II System contained the tasks, conditions, and standards applicable to the skills required of all company grade officers within the Army. The officer's first operational assignment allowed him to apply institutional knowledge gained from school training, develop leadership skills within troop units, and develop an understanding of army operations and military life. The first phase of officer development provided a solid foundation for future service through institutional training, self-development, and operational experience gained from practical application (DA PAM 600-3 1989, 7).

Under the 1989 version of OPMS, the Captain Phase further focused growth in practical leadership experience and professional military knowledge. An advance course and a staff service school provided the professional military knowledge. The advance course related directly to the officer's functional branch. The course was structured around instruction on core and branch specific subjects as well as instruction on general staff operations, administration, logistics, and tactics. The Combined Arms Service Staff School (CAS3) prepared officers for duties as a battalion and brigade level staff officer and was directed to be attended between the sixth and tenth year of service (DA PAM 600-3 1989, 8).

Practical leadership experience, the key objective during this phase, was gained through company command and staff positions within battalion or brigade level units. DA PAM 600-3 (1989) describes the company command as an invaluable assignment for the development of leadership abilities and extremely important in the professional development process. Furthermore, it states that company command positions should be filled by officers who have demonstrated the potential for and the desire to command

troops and that stability of company commanders was critical to the readiness and cohesion of the units (DA PAM 600-3 1989, 7).

In 1996 the Army Chief of Staff chartered the first significant revision to the OPMS since 1984. This comprehensive review and effort supported other studies being conducted on the future of the Army into the twenty-first century and was titled the OPMS XXI Study (DA PAM 600-3 1998, 3). The OPMS XXI Study focused on the development and implementation of personnel management policies and procedures that assured a deployable, professional officer corps capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century. The policies and directives recommended by this study are implemented through DA PAM 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management* (1998), and set the current standards for leader development. DA PAM 600-3 (1998) and the *OPMS XXI Study* provide the foundation for this thesis.

DA PAM 350-58, *Leader Development for America's Army* (1994), describes the Army's approach to leader development and serves as a guide for officers, noncommissioned officers, and civilian leaders. This document institutionalized the leader development process, the three pillars of leader development, and the leader development support system. This document was developed to meet the expanding challenges of the 1990s and beyond. DA PAM 350-58 recognizes the need for the Army to fill its vital roles in all aspects of the country's national security and national military strategies. It stated that leaders must be versatile to ensure success in war and operations other than war--in the combined arms, joint, combined, and coalition areas (DA PAM 350-58 1994, 3).

DA PAM 350-58 further states that the Army is committed to the development of its leaders at all levels. Leaders must be developed before assuming and while occupying leadership positions to ensure they are competent in and confident of their ability to lead at the levels assigned. Army leaders gain skills, knowledge, and behavior through a combination of schooling, assignments, and self-development. This system is progressive and sequential and is supported by the three pillars of leader development--institutional training and education, operational assignments, and self-development.

DA PAM 350-58 introduced the Officer Foundation Standards. Sets of core tasks that all officers from precommissioning through the grade of captain regardless of branch must be proficient.

FM 22-100, *Army Leadership* (revised final draft, 1997), provides leadership doctrine for all Army leaders. This manual provides a unified theory of leadership for the Army and doctrine that enables leaders to meet mission requirements during times of peace and during the conduct of all other operations. It further provides a comprehensive and adaptable leadership manual for the twenty-first century. FM 22-100 was significantly revised in 1998 to provide descriptions of the leadership core dimensions, descriptions of the Army leader character, and a clarification of the skills and actions by leadership level. Additionally, this document provides a discussion of leader development responsibilities.

FM 25-100, *Training the Force* (1988), is the Army's standardized training doctrine. It provides the necessary guidelines to plan, execute, and assess training at all levels. This manual provides authoritative foundations for the individual, leader, and unit

training and provides the guidelines for leader training development and leader training responsibilities.

FM 25-101, *Battle Focused Training* (1988), is the companion doctrinal manual to FM 25-100. FM 25-100 established the Army training doctrine. FM 25-101 applies that doctrine and assists leaders in the development and execution of training programs. This manual provides the “how-to” guidelines for officers and noncommissioned officers to use including techniques and procedures for planning, executing, and assessing training.

FM 7-10, *The Infantry Rifle Company* (1990), provides doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures on how all infantry rifle companies fight. The primary audience for this manual is the infantry company commander. This manual is a representative of Army doctrine focused on the company commander. This manual will be the primary company commander level tactical reference used during analysis. It is not meant to represent the only company level doctrinal resource available, but it is the doctrinal area the researcher is most familiar. This manual provides doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures expected to be used by an infantry company commander.

John G. Meyer’s book *Company Command* provides an in-depth discussion on company command. General Meyer explores and examines the “whys” and the “hows” of company level command. His book was an excellent source for this study by providing the expectations of a company commander. It further discussed the relationship between a company commander and his subordinate leaders.

The literature review revealed a number of articles written both by military professionals and persons outside the military regarding the skills, attributes, and

expectations of company level leaders. Of particular note was Donald E. Vandergriff's "Creating the Officer Corps of the Future to Execute Force XXI Blitzkrieg" (1997). In his article, written for *Armor Magazine*, Major Vandergriff discussed the current officer management system and the needs of a future system to support the Army in the twenty-first century. Major Vandergriff discussed many of the issues address by this thesis and provided additional sources for review.

A review of past theses and monographs produced for the Command and General Staff College as well as the Army War College and the Naval Postgraduate School provided additional information on the area of company command and command leadership. Major Gregory D. Reilly's thesis, "How Tactical Experience Affects Confidence About Combat Decision Making" (1997), produced for the Army Command and General Staff College provided a systematic, detailed study of the tactical abilities of battalion and company commanders at the National Training Center (NTC). Major Reilly examined the results of battles fought during exercises at the NTC and the experience level of both battalion and company commanders. This data provided supporting information for trends and other observations of company commander performance at the training centers. Major Robert Maginnis, for his studies at the Naval Postgraduate School, wrote "Company Commander Competency Assessment for the United States Army" (1983). In this study Major Maginnis developed a competency test for company grade officers to determine core requirements. His study suggested that a standardized test be administered to officers to determine who should command. This study is well founded and provided excellent information for this thesis. Major Daniel Ruiz's thesis, "Leadership, A Combat Multiplier: The Officer Personnel Management

System, An Achilles Heel” (1982), was another source of literature reviewed and analyzed for this project which provided historical information on the formation of the Army’s current system and additionally, provided insight into many of the shortcomings of the Officer Personnel Management System.

The final area of review conducted was trends produced by the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL). These documents consist of observations from observer-controllers and analysis by analysts at CALL provided the researcher information and synthesized data from the Combat Training Centers on the performance of company and battalion level organization. These documents and other information produced by CALL provided a “benchmark” standard to the researcher to measure the current officer management system. This benchmark will assist the researcher during the analysis of the literature in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research for this thesis was designed to solve the problem: How can the U.S. Army produce more experienced and proficient company commanders within the constraints of its officer management system. To study this problem, a research question was developed to clearly define and focus the research problem: How can the U.S. Army's Officer Personnel Management Systems be improved to better prepare officers to command at the company level? Subordinate or secondary research questions were then developed to help guide the analysis of available literature, to establish criteria to evaluate the data, and to examine the research question which in turn will develop recommendations for the problem of producing more experienced and proficient company commanders for the Army.

The research design is a strategy which simultaneously considers several matters and their interrelationships (Carney 1972). The initial step in a research methodology is to decide the aim or target of inference of the research. The target is what the analyst wants to know or solve (Krippendorff 1980). Krippendorff further explained that during the review of data or literature there is an opportunity for the researcher to determine his focus and direction. During this phase of discovery the researcher specifies the criteria needed to demonstrate the validity of his inference and determined the manner in which the discovered evidence and data would be used to verify the hypotheses or answer the research question (Krippendorff 1980).

The research was developed and focused into distinct areas. Each area contained one or more of the subordinate research questions. The findings from each area assisted the researcher develop conclusions and set criteria based on an analysis of the content of the literature examined. These conclusions and subsequent criteria are the basis for the answer to the research question. The technique used to analyze the data was that of content analysis.

Content analysis is a research technique that forces the researcher to be conscious of the purpose of the investigation by maintaining focus on the inference or frame of reference. Content analysis enables the researcher to sort through a large amount of data quickly and systematically (Carney 1972). Content analysis must proceed in an orderly fashion organized around the questions the researcher is determined to answer. A content analysis suggests methods to format questions, but it does not specify the questions to ask. Questions are formed against a theoretical background developed by the researcher (Carney 1972, 280).

The method used to conduct the research for this thesis was an analysis of data published on the subject of officer management and development and the examination of personal observations and experience.

The first area of research focused on: What is required of company grade officers to command at the company level? This phase addressed the following secondary questions:

1. What are the standards and qualifications required for company level command?

2. How does the Army ensure an officer meets the standards and qualifications required for company level command?

3. What is expected of a company commander today and in the future?

This phase of the research provided the background needed for the second phase. Document collection and review in the form of secondary research was the primary method used during this phase. Army Regulation 600-3, *The Army Personnel Proponent System*, defines the Army's comprehensive system for the management of commissioned officers. Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management*, is the professional development guide for individual officers. This pamphlet focuses on the development and career management of commissioned officers of the U.S. Army. Additionally, this pamphlet provided the educational and practical experience requirements of officers of all ranks. DA PAM 600-3 (1998), the latest version of this document, was developed based on the conclusions and recommendation of the OPMS XXI Study completed in 1997. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5, *Force XXI Operation*, provided the requirements expected of officers for Army XXI and the Army After Next.

Additional information was gathered in the Army's emerging leadership doctrine, current training doctrine, articles, and past studies conducted on officer development, education, and management. This area of review provided the basis for future research by defining the requirements of officers now, by establishing the foundation of what will be expected of officers in the future, and by providing a historical context to center the

study upon. From this analysis criteria could be set to determine if the current officer development and education system utilized by the Army fell short of its goal.

The second area of research focused on the shortfalls of the current system. This phase attempted to answer the following secondary questions:

1. How does the current system manage and train officers in preparation for company level command?
2. Do company commanders perform to the level expected under the Army's current management and training model?

A review of the documentation of the regulatory *requirements* was conducted to determine the exact education, training, and organizational experience expected of company grade officers prior to assuming command of a company. Next, a review of company level organizational and tactical performance at the Army's Combat Training Centers and recent operational deployments was conducted to determine the proficiency of company level commanders. Further review was conducted to determine other Army requirements of company grade officers, such as staff positions and positions away from leadership positions. Finally, informal interviews were conducted with senior officers who had commanded battalion and brigade level organizations and were responsible for the operational training and development of company grade officers. The intent of this phase was to determine the weaknesses of the Army's current system based on policies, expectations, and performance of company level commanders.

The validity of this study was based primarily on the subjective evaluation of the researcher. To reduce the subjectivity, the initial phases of the research were designed to

identify certain criteria that established the characteristics of an effective officer management and training system. These criteria were developed from the conclusions of the OPMS XXI Study which established the Army's current OPMS. The researcher then applied the developed criteria against the observations and data examined to determine if the current system met, in all or part, the requirements established by the U.S. Army.

The purpose of this research project was to provide recommendations for a the problem: How can the U.S. Army produce more experienced and proficient company commanders? By examining this problem in the context of a research problem: How can the U.S. Army's Officer Personnel Management Systems be improved to better prepare officers to command at the company level? this study was conducted to expand the current understanding and to identify the shortfalls of the U.S. Army's officer management and training system with the intent to ensure the best-qualified and proficient officers command at the company level.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

The vignette introduced in the first chapter described a young officer facing some daunting challenges. He must decide in a matter of minutes, based on his knowledge, experience, and training, what actions are the best for his unit, his soldiers, and his mission and ultimately, what will maintain the reputation of his country. What tools did the Army provide this officer to properly face and solve these problems.

The Standards for Company Command

Determining the standards, requirements, and tools necessary to command a company-sized unit is an exercise in persistence; no one document provides this information. DA PAM 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management* (October 1998), lists company command as an element of company grade branch qualification, but does not satisfy the requirement for understanding what exactly must be accomplished by an officer to ensure he is qualified to command at the company level. To understand this, a holistic examination of the Officer Professional Management System (OPMS) must be conducted. This analysis will include a detailed review of the OPMS XXI Study, applicable regulations, and other documents that guided the evolution and development of the Army's current officer development, education, and management systems.

OPMS XXI

The current officer development and management represented in the October 1998 version of DA PAM 600-3 represents the first significant revision to the Army's

OPMS since 1984. This revision was the result of a comprehensive examination, titled *Officer Personnel Management System XXI Study*. This study was the third and latest since 1971 and reexamined the officer personnel management system in the context of the many challenges affecting the Army since the last OPMS study in 1984. The strategic changes brought about by the end of the Cold War; the increase of use of advanced technologies; the use of the military in noncombat missions, such as humanitarian relief and peacekeeping; and the Department of Defense (DoD) evolution towards a fully integrated joint warfighting capability created new requirements which affected the method the Army trained its officer corps.

The Army's fundamental purpose is to fight and win the Nation's wars (FM 100-1 1994). The officer corps is entrusted first with the mission to keep the force trained and ready and second to lead that force in combat and win. Therefore, an OPMS, first and foremost, is designed to develop officer leaders with the requisite skills, knowledge, and attributes to perform their central role--keeping the U.S. Army the preeminent ground force in the world (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996). While this mission has not changed, the environment for which today's officer leaders must accomplish this mission has. The most significant of these changes has been the drawdown of the Army at the end of the Cold War and three major legislative initiatives. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) of 1990, and Title VII and XI legislature for active component/reserve component (AC/RC) support in 1992 and 1993, each introduces changes and challenges to the Army officer management system. These events--coupled with a twelve-year span since the last formal review--prompted the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER), with the consent of General Dennis

Reimer, the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), to assemble a team to review and update the OPMS. The assembled group constituted the OPMS XXI Task Force, and it began its review in July 1996. The significant issues that General Reimer directed the Task Force to execute and that are relevant to this thesis were:

1. Maintain warfighting as the paramount skill, but foster officers who thoroughly understand how the Army works as an institution.
2. Examine the advisability of focused career paths, both in the operational Army and in the institutional Army.
3. Analyze how the Army educates and trains the officers of the future.
4. Create a conceptual framework that integrates OPMS with the Leader Development System.
5. Analyze ongoing character development initiatives.

Additional guidance provided by the CSA centers around the ongoing development and experimentation of Force XXI and the Army After Next--the two models used to denote future Army design. Warfighting doctrine written for military operations in the twenty-first century envisions intense, highly lethal, short-duration engagements fought by smaller, leader-intensive units scattered across a poorly defined battle area (TRADOC PAM 525-5 1994). The recent experiments involving Force XXI demonstrate that the Army must continue to develop leaders grounded in the historical perspectives of war. However, the results also demonstrate that officers need to acquire new analytical and cognitive skills for thinking through and solving complex military problems in the future (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996). This evolving doctrine stressed that success of Army units will depend upon leaders who are intellectually agile, logical,

creative, and innovative in their thinking and who are bold and audacious decision makers (TRADOC PAM 525-5 1994). The nature of future warfare and the success of future warfighting demand leaders with new skills, knowledge, and attributes. The results of Force XXI Army warfighting experiments demonstrate the need for officers who are comfortable commanding, leading, and managing in high-technology environments. Mission success of Force XXI units will depend upon how well leaders manage and operate Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence (C4I) systems to build and maintain a relevant common picture of the battlespace and synchronize military operations within it (TRADOC PAM 525-5 1994). The extent to which the Army exploits future advances in military and C4I technologies may eventually determine the force's effectiveness as a fighting force.

The Task Force's challenge was to create an evolutionary path for an officer corps for an Army that does not yet exist. The Army may look very similar to today's, and then again, it may be completely different than the organization and structure known by today's officer. Rather than attempt to predict what the future Army and its officer corps will consist of, the Task Force chose to build an OPMS that would adjust itself to the conditions of the environment for which it operates--sustaining what is best in the current system while shaping itself for the future.

The Task Force began by identifying what strategic end OPMS should fundamentally serve for the Army. Then, formulating a set of objectives and goals to ensure OPMS attained that end. The strategic end and the supporting objectives would define what a strong and healthy OPMS should do for the Army. The critical component would be the endstate desired; not the specific operating mechanisms designed to reach

them. On the basis of the guidance received and the direction for which to move forward, the Task Force developed from its detailed mission analysis the following tasks and primary purposes for the study:

Tasks

1. Review OPMS and recommend appropriate changes
2. Recommend an executable conceptual framework for OPMS XXI
3. Design an implementation strategy for the Task Force's recommendations that provides a mechanism for periodic reviews and updates

Purposes

1. Address Total Army and joint requirements into the twenty-first century
2. Develop officers with the appropriate skills, knowledge, and attributes to fight the Army successfully and run it expertly as an institution
3. Develop officers whose behavior exemplifies Army values

These tasks and corresponding purposes entails developing an officer corps that can effectively shape, train, and lead the Army twenty-five years from now.

The Task Force examined four fundamental areas of officer management-leader development, officer education, sustaining the officer corps, and distribution of officers by grade and skill--all of which are needed to meet the Army's warfighting and institutional requirements.

The CSA chartered the OPMS Task Force to design an officer management and development system to meet the needs of both the basic branch officer and functional area specialist. Therefore, the Task Force examined all aspects of officer professional

development, including officer life-cycle models, promotions, commands, and professional military schools. Time, budget, and manpower constraints limited the study to the following areas:

1. Active component
2. Army Competitive Category
3. Field-grade officer development
3. Field-grade officer structure by grade and skill

The assumptions used by the Task Force were provided primarily from two sources, the CSA and other senior leaders and from background research conducted by Task Force members which covered future officer personnel management requirements. The primary assumptions developed by the OPMS Task Force were:

1. Officer authorizations will not increase over the next three to five years.
2. Recommended changes to DoD policies and congressional laws governing officer management will not be implemented in the near term, but may be implemented in the mid to long term (i.e., ten to twenty years).
3. Current funding levels for officer professional development and management will continue into the foreseeable future.
4. Officer career progression will continue as an up-or-out system and will comply with DOPMA promotion constraints for time-in-grade (TIG), promotion opportunity, and career lengths.

The next step taken by the Task Force was formulating the goals for evaluating and prioritizing OPMS alternatives. They included:

1. *Better for the Nation*: Maintain national military readiness of the Army.

2. *Better for the Army*: Remain uncompromising regarding the tradition of values-based leadership while producing competent officers and highly trained capable units.

3. *Better for the Officer*: Afford all officers challenging and fulfilling career options and reasonable opportunities for success.

For each of these goals, the Task Force identified characteristics of a successful officer development system which include:

1. Better for the Nation

- a. Demonstrates responsible stewardship of national resources
- b. Represents the diverse society it serves
- c. Returns quality citizens to the Nation

2. Better for the Army

- a. Develops officers who personify enduring Army values
- b. Integrates the Leader Development System and OPMS
- c. Fosters sustained unit excellence
- d. Matches operating inventory to authorizations
- e. Promotes active component and reserve component interoperability
- f. Develops officers who perform effectively in a joint environment
- g. Develops motivated, competent, and experienced officers

3. Better for the Officer

- a. Establishes credible officer career opportunities.
- b. Helps officers form realistic expectations of career outcomes.

The recent Army warfighting experiments revealed a need for officers with skills, knowledge, and attributes different from those required in the past. The Task Force determined that the Army must develop officers with the appropriate professional military education, civil schooling, training, and military experience to solve a wider range of military problems in the future (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996). To accomplish this and meet the objectives and goals defined by the study within the limitations and constraints identified by the Task Force, the members recognized that the Army must make changes. These changes will affect how officers are trained, educated, and professionally developed to ensure the Army has the appropriate mix of generalist and specialist with the right skills, knowledge, and attributes to solve future problems--problems that may be substantially different from today's.

OPMS Purpose

The purpose of an OPMS is to enhance the effectiveness and professionalism of the officer corps. An OPMS encompasses the policies and procedures the Army utilizes to procure, train, develop, assign, evaluate, promote, and separate officers on and from active duty. The previous system was designed to accomplish four tasks:

1. Procure and designate officers in the right numbers and with the right skills to satisfy current and projected requirements
2. Develop the professional capacities of officers through planned schooling and sequential, progressive assignments.
3. Assign officers to meet Army requirements
4. Separate officers in a way to meet the Army needs

The tasks outlined above are enduring and unchanging principles the Task Force felt defined what an OPMS should provide the Army. The manner for which the system accomplished these tasks was the issue addressed by the Task Force. Therefore, the Task Force focused its efforts on how the system could better accomplish them in light of the current conditions and conditions most likely to occur in the near future.

Officership

The Task Force reviewed what officers do for the Army and their unique roles and responsibilities. Lieutenant General (Retired) Frederic Brown described officer responsibilities this way: "The . . . commissioned officer leads the fight, deciding what is to be done and where. He or she is concerned with the larger goals of the organization, determining when new circumstances dictate change, in accordance with broad conceptual direction" (National Defense Research Institute 1994, 13).

Officers are the uniformed leaders of the Army--at all levels. They integrate the efforts of soldiers into effective, collective action on and off the battlefield. They serve in duty positions associated with leading people and managing the direction, performance, and resources of the organizations they lead. To accomplish these tasks they are professionally developed through a balanced progression of education, training, and experience which prepares them for service in increasingly higher levels of responsibility (Huntington 1982). Huntington further identified expertise, responsibility, and corporateness as the three defining elements of an officer's professional character. Additionally, Huntington describes an officer as an expert with specialized knowledge and skill in the art of war and its related activities. The essential character of an officer's military service and his monopoly on military skill impose on the officer the

responsibility to perform his military duties when required by his society. An officer will no longer be a military professional if he refuses to accept this social responsibility.

Finally, officers, as members of a profession, share a sense of unity and of being part of a special group apart from others. This collective sense is grounded in the unique discipline, education, training, work, and responsibilities peculiar to military service (Huntington 1982).

Officers hold the responsibility to set the professional and ethical tone in the Army. They imbue the warfighting ethos in their units. The Task Force identified the following as key to what officers do for the Army:

1. Officers are experts at warfighting and the organized application of violence.
2. Officers articulate and embody the Army ethic by their focus on warfighting as the Army's reason for being and their fostering of core Army values.
3. Officers provide uniformed, organizational leadership in the following ways:
 - a. Provide long-term vision and planning for the Army
 - b. Establish and maintain the Army's professional standards
 - c. Assume ultimate responsibility for the organization's actions and their results
 - d. Maintain trained and ready units and organizations
4. Officers bring military expertise to the design and management of the Army and DoD systems.

The Task Force determined that officers are responsible for everything their organizations do or fail to do. If the Army's primary purpose is to fight and win the

nation's wars, then the officer corps' primary purpose is to keep that Army trained and ready and then lead it to victory when called to do so (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

Values and Character

James Collins and Jerry Porris in their book *Built to Last* define core values as "the organization's essential and enduring tenets--a small set of general guiding principles; not to be confused with specific cultural or operating practices; not to be compromised for financial gain or short-term expediency." Organizational values must not only support and be coherent with the core purpose--they must also be absolutely essential to its attainment (Collins and Porris 1994). Officer values and character are central to sustaining the Army if it is to remain unsurpassed.

Fundamental to the Army's officer system are the values it promotes and the behavior it expects of its officers. The Army is a values based organization which expects its officers to embody its institutional values and, therefore, expects and deserves its officer personnel management system to set conditions that foster ethical behavior which support the Army's purpose and warfighting ethos. Officers develop moral judgment and assimilate the Army values only through habitual practice, guidance, and reflection over time. If the Army expects to have officers of character, it must invest in their development routinely over the course of their careers.

These conditions were present in the previous OPMS but they require vigilance. An officer development system must have systemic mechanisms to foster the Army's core values and ethic.

Junior Officer Development

The Task Force felt the fundamental development assignment patterns and goals for company grade officers were and continue to be appropriate. The type and variety of assignments articulated under the previous system give junior officers the developmental base and experience they require and prepare them for the functions the Army expects of them--particularly with respect to warfighting and other operational missions. The Task Force felt it of particular importance that all officers be grounded in the operational force as company-grade officers and to be certified in the basics of leadership and Army operations company command. Company command, the Task Force concluded, is the absolutely indispensable developmental experience and text that all officers must succeed in (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

The Strategic Question

An officer personnel system which is accessing and managing the officers who will lead the Army of the twenty-first century must first and foremost be designed to enhance the operational effectiveness and performance of the Army. Operational performance within the Army has two aspects: first, continual preparedness today to execute Army missions successfully across the full spectrum of operations and second, building the Army of the future.

The Army's expertise and effectiveness in warfighting is the fundamental competency that supports its credibility in performing other roles and missions in support of national security strategies, such as peacekeeping, peacemaking operations, humanitarian support, and other stability missions. Building and sustaining an officer corps capable to execute the wide variety of tasks required for successful combined arms

operations in a joint and multinational environment and prepared to execute “other” tasks not directly related to warfighting requires an OPMS with remarkable flexibility. The Task Force recognized that OPMS XXI must recognize the constantly increasing complexity and difficulty of Army operations across the full spectrum of conflict and adapt accordingly. Further, the Army must produce officers of character who embrace and personify its values to lead its soldiers effectively under the demands of combat and operations other than combat. This requires a rigorous developmental experience that OPMS XXI must not just tacitly support, but actively foster (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

Building the Army of the future is equally important. The Army is a complex system of systems providing the institutional base the operational force is supported from. The Army requires officers able to perform essential functions which fall outside the traditional warfighting role but are necessary to field an Army that can fight and win. These functions require officers with substantial relevant experience and expertise who can anticipate the doctrinal, training, and organizational requirements of future operations and then prepare the Army to meet them (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996). Officers must be grounded in the operational Army and then trained in specialty or technical skills that support the Army’s systemic, functional needs.

These two components of an OPMS, preparing for combat and preparing for the future, are consistent with the national defense strategy. This strategy consists of three elements *shaping* the international environment, *responding*, to the full spectrum of crises, and *preparing* for the future (OSD Strategy 1996). This strategy suggests that the Army must produce officers in broad skill groupings that can address and support each of the three elements. The Task Force determined that the new OPMS should consist of a

three-part officer personnel strategy. First, it should produce officers to maintain the operational force readiness to respond--today and tomorrow. Second, create a cadre of officers who will lead units that contribute to the shaping of tactical, operational, and strategic conditions. Third, produce officers who can prepare and produce the Army of tomorrow by orchestrating the complex systems within the Army and across DoD. (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

The Army must place greater emphasis on human development--hence officer development--in a technologically advanced Army (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996). The human dimension is at the heart of the organizational effectiveness whether on the battlefield or in the Pentagon. Army systems depend on the skill of the soldiers and the officers who lead them. High standards of organizational performance is the objective of the Army and maximizing the tools officers learn and use operationally should be the goal of an officer management system.

Officer contribution to the organizational performance contains two components: development of individual skills and development of organizational skills. To attain maximum organizational performance officers must be given adequate time, education, and developmental experience as individuals to become outstanding leaders. This entails providing officers with the experience and expertise to meet all of the Army's complex systemic needs. It suggests that leadership teams need to spend a significant amount of time as a group to develop their collective skills, grow as a learning organization, and build cohesion to maximize the organizational performance of the group (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996). Additionally, the officer development systems must develop operational specialist who are expert at warfighting, capable of operating across the full spectrum of

military operations and functional area specialist able to design, build, and integrate future Army systems. From this strategic approach the Task Force chose to focus on improving the Army's organization performance rather than just focusing on making the current OPMS operate more efficiently. Improving the Army's operational units and the organizations that support them became the context in which the Task Force examined OPMS and prepared to make recommendations for improvement.

The first area of analysis was to determine how well the current OPMS develops officers with the right skills and depth of experience necessary to enhance the collective effectiveness of the organizations they lead and manage. This analysis had three distinct pieces:

1. Does the current system give officers the operational experience they need to become competent and effective field-grade commanders?
 2. Does the Army develop officers who possess functional area specialty expertise and experience?
 3. How is individual officer experience contributing to the development of competent, cohesive, and well-integrated leadership organizations across the Army?
- This last dynamic, individual officer experience, is key to producing highly effective organizations--warfighting or otherwise.

Assessing Today's OPMS

The Task force determined that the current OPMS did not provide officers the developmental experience required to enhance collective organizational performance. Officers have too many career requirements and not enough time to do them all. This problem was further determined to be caused by three underlying factors:

1. Disparities between officer authorizations and inventory resulting from the drawdown
2. Other authorization changes driven by changes in law or policy
3. Structure-inventory mismatches caused by how the Army accesses officers and distributes them among the branches

The Task Force examined each of these factors in detail. While not the sole source for the shortcomings of the current OPMS, the Task Force determined they are at the root of many, if not all.

Discrepancy Between Officer Inventory and Authorizations

The Army has more officers in its operational inventory than authorizations, but they are not in the right grades and skills to fit the Army's needs. The Army has more company-grade officers than required. These excess officers are primarily lieutenants and captains who are not yet branch qualified--having fulfilled the requirements for company grade qualification, specifically company command. Additionally, the Army is short approximately 3,500 field-grade officers to fill authorizations. The most significant shortfall is at the rank of major, which the Army is about 2,300 officers short. This translates to a significant number of lieutenants and captains filling positions at grades higher than their serving grade (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

This problem is compounded due to the composition of officer *authorizations* shifting in two significant directions. First, since 1988 the TDA authorizations have grown in proportion to TOE authorizations by approximately 2.5 percent. Second, there has been a like proportional shift from the company grades to the field grades, the largest

increase being at the rank of major. These shifts have occurred while the actual number of major authorizations has remained relatively constant.

The Task Force determined two main causes for the significant proportional increase in authorizations. The first was an increase in Joint and DoD field-grade authorizations. The second was an increase of field-grade authorizations driven by Title XI AC/RC legislation. This finding was important for several reasons. First, there are proportionally fewer branch qualifying jobs for majors in relation to the total number of majors requiring these jobs for career progression. Second, because Joint/DoD and Title XI AC/RC jobs are typically Personnel Priority Group (PPG) 1 or 2 priority fill, they are filled at or near 100 percent, a higher priority than warfighting troop unit positions.

This trend greatly aggravates the effect of the cumulative shortages on lower PPG units, such as divisional and below operational units. For example, of the approximately 10,300 major authorizations, more than 3,000 are PPG 1 or 2--other than operational units. From the 10,300 requirements, only 8,050 majors are available to fill these positions. Subtract the officers in the trainees, transients, holdees, and student (TTHS) account and the 3,000 officer which are mandated by law to fill PPG 1 and 2 positions and the Army is left with less than 5,000 officers to fill the remaining 7,300 requirements. This relates to an average 70 percent fill capability for the remaining requirements--not all of which are operational positions (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

The cumulative effect of this mismatch compounded the problem. Major Army Commands (MACOMS) are filled with field-grade officers, specifically majors, at 69 percent to 79 percent. Divisions--the Army's warfighting units and part of the MACOMS--are subsequently filled at this percentage or lower. The requirement to man

PPG 1 and 2 units at full strength produced the requirement to move officers who complete the minimum branch-qualifying requirement from lower priority units to fill the higher priority PPG 1 and 2 jobs. This combination significantly increased assignment turbulence and consequently caused the operational effectiveness of the Army's warfighting units to decrease. Proportionally more of the field-grade force is committed to the institutional Army, making it harder for officers to get to warfighting units and stay there long enough to gain the experience necessary for higher levels of responsibility.

Officer Development

The current dual-track system where officers serve in their basic branch and then in a specialty branch should give the Army highly skilled and experienced officers for branch, functional area, and branch/generalist requirements. It should produce officers who are experienced in branch functions related to Army warfighting and skilled in the variety of other specialties the Army requires.

The objective of the OPMS XXI Study was to improve the warfighting effectiveness of officers and the units to which they are assigned. A fundamental premise of the study was that building combat-effective battalion and brigade commanders is the focal point of officer branch development. The two most important development tools use to produce effective battalion and brigade commanders are company-level command and the branch-qualifying jobs for majors--battalion and brigade level operations and executive officers positions. A survey of field commanders by the Task Force determined that eighteen to twenty-four months of experience at each of these two developmental, branch-qualifying positions is optimal and that twenty-four months in

each would provide the appropriate experience required to produce the best-qualified battalion and brigade commanders (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

Current trends indicate that experience in these critical branch-qualifying positions was declining, and that the downward trend was the greatest at the rank of major (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996). This trend was largely the result of the reduction in operational units during the drawdown and the proportionally smaller number of billets in units available to captains and majors. But there are other reasons for this decline in branch experience. Majors have a four-year window to become branch-qualified before they are considered in the primary zone for promotion to lieutenant colonel, this is a decrease of about a year from the trends of the late 1980s. Conversely, the demand for senior captains and majors has gone up, giving these officers less time to gain the required experience. This smaller qualification window places a timing challenge on these officers. A successful senior captain or major under the current system attends the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) for a year, spends another year at a division or brigade level job waiting to be assigned to the required branch-qualifying job, and then fill a branch-qualifying job for twelve to eighteen months. If they are successful, hit the window perfectly or early, they may have the opportunity to remain for a second year. If the officer is late moving into one of these positions, the officer will be pressed to fulfill a year in the branch-qualifying position prior to his lieutenant colonel board (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

The Task Force further determined that, because there are proportionately fewer branch-qualifying jobs, more officers are competing for fewer jobs. This issue is most crucial in the combat arms, where it is impossible to give every officer in a year group

one year of critical branch-qualifying time, let alone two. In order to provide each officer additional branch-qualified time, most branches would have to reduce their population of majors by half.

These facts are further complicated by the high demand for branch-qualified majors in nonwarfighting PPG 1 and PPG 2 TDA positions. This requirement creates a need to reassign majors and captains as soon as they are minimally branch-qualified. These high-priority-fill jobs create a "pull effect" that serves to reinforce annual turnover in key branch-qualifying jobs and increases officer assignment turbulence (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

These factors jointly serve to reduce captains' and majors' operational experience and create high officer turnover in units as well as in other organizations. This causes a proportional drop in expertise of officers preparing for future positions of greater responsibility. There are too many officers competing for too few branch-qualifying jobs. Bernard D. Rostker, a personnel expert, in his unpublished working paper on "Management of the Officer Career Force" describes this dynamic as such:

High billet throughput lowers the quality of tour experiences. The "dash for the top" . . . has resulted in limiting opportunities for officers to fully develop needed proficiencies by trying to do too much in too little time. . . . In order to position top candidates for upper military leadership positions, individuals often serve for a limited time in certain assignments to satisfy necessary career milestones. While high billet throughput may afford some individuals a broadened experience base, true expertise and competence can not be achieved except for only basic or elementary tasks. (1997, 1)

Leader Turbulence and Unit Effectiveness

The shorter branch-qualifying tours and rapid turnover in key billets not only impact an officer's individual development, it also has an organizational readiness affect

because they both contribute to the commander's ability to build a cohesive, well-trained, and effective leadership team. The Task Force recognized that many factors contribute to a unit's overall effectiveness and cohesion, but most of these factors are a function of training or leadership and are largely outside of the personnel system's ability to control. Battalion commanders typically have two XOs and two S-3s during their two-year command tour. It is not uncommon for many battalion or brigade commanders to have three in one or both of these important jobs. When the rotational pattern of company commanders and other key company grade officers is taken into consideration, the assignment overlap between officers for effective team building decreases even more. A battalion commander today, with two years in his position, will see, at the most, thirteen different company commanders (Vandergriff 1997). Overlay the typical unit training/operational cycle over the rotational pattern and the issue is compounded. Most units operate on an annual training cycle punctuated roughly once every two years with a rotation to a Combat Training Center (CTC) or an actual operational mission. The result is that company and field-grade officers individually get about one rotation through an annual training cycle. As a leadership team they get significantly less time together and that time may be anywhere in a unit's preparation for, execution of, or recovery from a training or operational mission. A recent RAND Corporation analysis has shown that brigade staffs typically average about six months or less together before National Training Center (NTC) rotations. This analysis, studied by the Task Force, indicates that current staffs and the commanders have little time to develop team skill and integrity before being subjected to operational conditions.

Limited research data exist indicating just how long leadership teams need to train together before reaching proficiency, but there is ample evidence that many units are not arriving at the CTCs with the depth of collective training and skill integration they need to excel, or even perform well (*OPMS XXI Study* 1996).

Experience in the "Functional Areas"

The Task Force next examined the dual-track functional area system to determine if it was producing officers with true dual-track expertise and experience. The first finding showed that the vast majority of officers making battalion command hold Functional Area (FA) 41 and FA 54, two skill areas that require neither advanced civil schooling nor formal training. Very few officers with functional "hard skills" have made recent command lists, and only a relatively small percentage of them have spent any appreciable time (more than three years) in those functional areas. Since a very small number of single-track functional area officers are promoted to colonel, and since colonels are selected predominantly from former battalion commanders, the vast majority of officers who make colonel have neither the cumulative nor recent experience to prepare them well to step easily into senior functional area positions and perform well. Typically, their last functional area job was as a senior captain or junior major, some eight to ten years before their next functional area assignment.

Assessing OPMS for Tomorrow's World

The Task Force looked to the future to determine what would be needed of the officer leadership as the Army moves into the twenty-first century. Their findings

developed three areas of concern that must be addressed by any future officer management system.

First, as the Army becomes even more of a power projection force, it will be critically important that individual officers and their units be prepared to deploy with very little preparatory time and perform missions across the full operational spectrum. Operations in the future will not be easily divided into conventional conflicts, such as Iraq or Korea, or lower intensity operations, such as Bosnia or Somalia. The Army must be prepared to fight an enemy capable of warfare beyond what it expects (Peters 1996).

Second, as the Army becomes an information-based organization in which information dominance--both on the battlefield and in the institutional base--is central to the Army's success. It will require officers with a wide variety of information-related skills to perform effectively in this environment. This requirement argues that the Army should create and sustain career fields for specialists who can lead the Army's organization around information base subsystems. Additionally, the accelerating pace of technical knowledge and the associated shorter shelf life of this knowledge requires that officers have longer, more repetitive tours to gain the deep expertise and required experience. Finally, studies highlight the requirement to deploy rapidly and perform well on a confusing, high-tempo battlefield on a "come-as-you-are" basis. Force XXI and Army After Next research confirms this expectation and suggests that even those who remain in an operational track will be required to be "specialists" in warfighting. Maturity, expertise, and experience will become even more important than today on the high-technology, fast-paced, and complex battlefield of the future.

Significant Findings of the OPMS XXI Study

The Task Force concluded its research and analysis with the following findings they felt addressed the current system and must be addressed by any new OPMS:

1. Officer experience in key branch-qualifying jobs is declining.
2. The Army is not producing officers experienced in branch fundamentals and functional specialty areas.
3. The current system is unable to give its officers developmental time in units to hone their operational skills.
4. Recent experience indicates that deployments require you to come as you are with little or no train-up time.
5. The increasing complexity of skills required to effectively operate in specialty functional areas and the short shelf life of state-of-the-art knowledge require an increase in the frequency of these assignments and longer tours.
6. The increase of functional area assignments has a significant effect on the collective performance of warfighting units, because leader teams have little time to develop into cohesive, integrated units.
7. The Army has a significant grade/skill mismatch--particularly for branch-qualified majors--which causes turbulence and has a negative effect on unit cohesion and effectiveness.

The Task Force determined in order to meet the Army's needs presented by its research and analysis and to meet the guidance set forth by the CSA the new officer management system must achieve the following:

1. Reduce the number and variety of assignments an officer must fill to allow the development of experience and depth of knowledge in a specialty, both operational and functional.

2. Provide more time in key developmental positions, particularly at the grade of major, in order to develop better battalion and brigade commanders.

3. Provide a pool of skilled specialist at the field-grade ranks to meet the demands of an increasingly technologically advanced Army.

For OPMS XXI to effectively meet the guidance of the CSA, the goals set forth by the Task Force and address the findings of the study, the Task Force recommended a system designed around three subsystems: (1) Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), (2) Officer Development System (ODS), and (3) Career Field-based Management System (CF). The most proficient method to analyze these recommendations and how they affect the qualifications of company-grade officers, specifically company commanders, is to examine the OPMS XXI implementation tool, DA PAM 600-3, *Commissioned Officers Development and Career Management*.

DA PAM 600-3 is designed to be a professional development guide for individual officers and to serve as a mentoring tool for leaders at all levels and is an important personnel management guide for assignment officers, proponents, and selection boards. It is focused on the development and career management of commissioned officers and provides the description and explanation of key terms and concepts. Additionally, DA PAM 600-3 provides the base requirements expected of commissioned officers as they progress through their careers (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

Within the three recommendations set forth by the Task Force, the Officer Development System and the Career Field-based management system address the factors of company-grade officer qualifications.

Officer Development System

The Officer Development System (ODS) institutes a comprehensive management tool that encompasses and integrates the Army's leader development systems. Army leader development consist of three pillars; institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development. These three pillars define a continuous cycle of selection, education, training, experience, assessment, feedback, reinforcement, and evaluation. The process is designed to provide leaders at all levels of their development a continuous and comprehensive educational base tempered with reinforcing operational experience.

Institutional Training

Institutional training includes the formal schoolhouse training and education officers receive. Leaders train to perform critical tasks while learning values, attributes, and skills essential to leader development and high-quality leadership. Institutional training provides the foundation upon which all future development rest. It provides the progressive, sequential education and training required to develop operational and functional area technical and tactical competencies as well as the core dimensions of leadership. The bedrock institutional training consist of the Officer Basic Course, the Captains Career Course, the Command and General Staff College, and the Senior Service

College (DA PAM 600-3 1998). Each of these training experiences is link through the Officer Education System (OES).

The OES is designed to produce a board-base corps of leaders who possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and attributes to perform their duties. The OES is designed to provide the officer knowledge of how the Army operates and to require leaders to demonstrate confidence, integrity, critical judgment, and responsibility while operating in an environment of complexity (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

Institutional Training and Education consists of two major instructional subcomponents--branch technical/tactical and common core. Branch technical/tactical instruction is occupationally oriented with a predominant focus on the skills individuals officers will need to achieve success in specific branch functions. Common core are generic leader development instruction (TRADOC Reg. 351-10 1997).

Common core tasks are the consolidation of common leader, military, and directed training subjects prescribed by law, and Army regulation. They are the tasks officers are expected to perform successfully, regardless of branch, at each successive stage of their careers. They are the tasks each officer is required to master before progressing to the next level of responsibility. Common core instruction begins at precommissioning and continues at each educational level. The instruction is progressive, sequential and builds upon the skills and knowledge acquired through previous training and operational assignments (DA PAM 600-3, 1998). There are 87 core tasks for precommissioning, 59 for the Officer Basic Course, 62 for the Captains Career Course, and 12 for the Command and General Staff Officer Course (TRADOC Memo).

Operational Assignments

Operational assignments constitute the second pillar of leader development. Upon completion of institutional training, leaders are assigned to operational positions which provide officers the experience to build on the skills gain during the formal education process. This experience is designed to prepare officers to lead and train soldiers and units in preparation for their warfighting missions. Commanders and senior leaders play a significant and instrumental role in this developmental phase of an officer's education. They are responsible for establishing leader development programs, explain unit and individual performance standards, and assess individual officer performance (DA PAM 600-3, 1998).

Self-Development

The self-development pillar of leader development is defined as a planned, progressive, and sequential program followed by officers to enhance and sustain military competencies (DA PAM 600-3 1998). Self-development encompasses individual study, research, professional reading, practice and self-assessment. It is designed to be accomplished by the officer through numerous means consistent with an officer's personnel self-development action plan. Self-development is designed to solidify the Army leader development process and is a key aspect of an individual officer's qualification.

Career Field-Based Management System

The Career Field-based management system is the heart of OPMS XXI. It is designed to develop officers by providing a variety of assignments centered around their

branch and functional areas. Under OPMS XXI each officer is accessed into the Army's basic branches. This basic branch becomes their basic specialty and through sequential education and operational assignments officers are provided the opportunity to meet their specific branch qualifications. Midway through an officer's company grade years he receives a functional area specialty. Following selection for promotion to major, an officer is designated into one of four Career Fields where they continue their development as field grade officers in one specialty, either in their basic branch or functional area (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

Once assigned a Career Field, officers are developed under a dual-track assignment system. Officers will be assigned to positions requiring expertise in the specialty associated with his designated Career Field, either branch skills or functional area skills. There are thirty-eight branch and functional area specialties in OPMS XXI. A branch is a grouping of officers that comprises an arm or service of the Army and is the specialty in which all officers are commissioned, trained and developed. Officers hold a single branch designation and serve in repetitive and progressive assignments within his branch. A functional area is a grouping of officers by specialty other than an arm, service, or branch which possesses interrelated groups of skills and performs tasks that require additional schooling, training, and experience (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

The development of an officers values, attributes, skills and actions to meet the needs of the Army is accomplished through the Officer Development System designed around proponent designated life cycle models for each branch and functional area (DA PAM 600-3 1998). Life cycle models depict the schooling, operational assignments, and self-development goals that define officer qualification for each grade by branch and

functional area. Distinct career development models are inherent to OPMS. There are four basic phases of officer career development that relate to the military grade and experiences of an officer's cohort year group (DA PAM 600-3 1998). These phases reflect the education and training, operational assignments and self-development goals required of an officers branch or functional area. A generic OPMS life cycle model depicting the distinct phases is portrayed in table 1.

Table 1. Officer Life Cycle Development Model

Years of Service					
0 ----- 5 ----- 10 ----- 15 ----- 20 ----- 30					
PRECOMMISSIONING	Company Grade		MAJ	LTC	COL
	OBC	Captains Career Course	CGSOC	SSC	
	Initial Branch Duty With Troops	Branch Qualification (Company Command)	Branch Qualification	Battalion Command	Brigade Command
		Functional Area Assignment	Functional Area Qualification	Functional Area Qualification	Functional Area Qualification
		Branch Assignment	Functional Area Assignment	Functional Area Assignment	Functional Area Assignment
		Branch/Functional Area Generalist Assignment	Branch/Functional Area Generalist Assignment	Branch/Functional Area Generalist Assignment	Branch/Functional Area Generalist Assignment
			Joint Duty	Joint Duty	Joint Duty

Company grade development consists of two phases, prebranch qualification and postbranch qualification. Prebranch qualification begins upon entry on active duty and

lasts through the eighth year of service. This phase consist of the Officer Basic Course (OBC), initial operational assignments, the Captains Career Course (CCC), Functional Area (FA) designation, and branch qualification (BQ). OBC begins an officer's formal military professional training by preparing officers for his first duty assignment and providing instruction on branch/technical subjects as well as the prescribed common core tasks (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

Initial operational assignments begin upon the completion of OBC and will include duty positions in operational units. Initial assignments are designed to continue the officer's education of Army operations and military life and build a solid foundation for future service. The CCC follows the officer's selection for promotion to captain and normally falls between the fourth and fifth year of active service. The CCC consists of two phases. The branch phase consists of eighteen weeks of branch specific technical and tactical training with integrated common core instruction and the six-week Command and Staff Service School (CAS3) which prepare officers to function as staff officers at battalion, brigade, and division level (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

Between the officer's fifth and sixth year of service, he is designated a FA by the Officer Professional Management Division. The officer's FA designation is based on the officer's preference, branch specialty, civilian education, and the needs of the Army. Officers will normally complete branch qualification prior to training and assignments in their functional area.

Branch qualification for company grade officers is traditionally considered complete when an officer has commanded a company, battery, or troop for at least eighteen months and completed the CCC. Branch qualification for a given year group of

officers is generally met by the eighth year of service. Achieving branch qualification is a requirement for the next phase of company grade career development.

Postbranch qualification assignments occur between the eighth and twelfth year of service and consist of a variety of requirements based on the officer's developmental objectives, relative manner of performance, individual preference and Army requirements. Branch assignments include staff and faculty positions service schools, Combat Training Centers (CTC) and tactical or training units. Branch assignments further develop the basic branch skills and employ the officer's accumulated skills, knowledge and attributes (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

Branch and or functional area generalist assignments are not specific as to branch or functional area but require certain levels of experience, manner of performance, and demonstrated potential. They include assignments to recruiting, ROTC, and the U.S. Military Academy.

Functional area development begins once an officer completes branch qualification. Based on the life cycle model of the functional area proponent, branch-qualified officers attend specialized training courses in their respective fields to prepare them for future developmental assignments. Examples of specialized training include advance civil schooling, training with industry, and the Army Acquisition Corps (AAC). Each functional area proponent establishes specific courses and other requirements to prepare officers for functional area assignments. Functional area tours for captains are generally three to four years. Initial schooling and assignment in a functional area is an important step in achieving qualification in a skill and influence subsequent Career Field designation (DA PAM 600-3 1998).

Major development encompasses the twelfth to seventeenth years of service and begins with selection for promotion to major and career field designation. Developmental goals are focused around the officers career field and consist of completing the institutional education requirement of Military Education Level 4 and qualifying assignments in the officer's branch or functional area.

Making the Grade

Regarding specific . . . trends in performance . . . we are seeing an absence of proficiency in the fundamentals of warfighting at the tactical level of war . . . companies display an inability to envision the terrain and its effects . . . to dominate and win the direct fire battle. Mounted forces at company team level display poor movement techniques, dispersion, and movement control. Most display an inability to mass and control direct fire systems, perform actions on contact, and employ mortars and artillery. This declining level of proficiency in basic, foundation-level skills are the most ominous trend we see. . . . what I see is an Army reeling from the effects of decisions imposed upon it externally and internally . . . a sustained shortage of leaders, high personnel turbulence created by an imbalance of force structure and national requirements; less experienced leaders produced by a decreasing amount of time to serve in critical leader development positions; . . . expanding peacekeeping operations which quickly erode warfighting knowledge, skill, and ability, creating a growing generation of young leaders who don't know how to fight as members of a combined arms team. (Rosenberger 1999)

Colonel Rosenberger's concerns on the state of training readiness described during his address to Congress in February 1999, highlighted a number of consistent trends reported by the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL).

Table 2 highlights trends reported by CTC Observer-Controllers (OC) and compiled by CALL analysts in the *CTC Trend Compendiums*.

Table 2. Trends

Time Frame	CTC	Total Rotations Observed	Total Trends Reported	Total Negative Trends	Total Company Related
Oct 94 - Mar 97	NTC	38	70	57	26
Aug 94 - June 97	JRTC*	30	161	67	60
Total		48	231	124	86

*Represents two Trend Compendiums.

These observations cover a 2 ½ year reporting period and forty-eight unit rotations. Company level "Needs Improvement" observations account for 69 percent of the negative performance trends reported by the OCs. The observations reported cover every battlefield operating system (BOS) and range from poor precombat checks to the inability to move as a company. Observations reported by the training centers focus on battalion and brigade level trends, but show the cause of the challenges faced by the higher level units the result of poor company level execution.

An analysis of the comments made by the OCs and from personal observations made during the timeframe show a lack of experience and a lack of basic knowledge of the technical and tactical aspects of company level operations by company commanders as the root cause of these negative trends.

Expectations for Force XXI

TRADOC PAM 525-5, *Force XXI Operations*, states future leader development systems must produce leaders which are fundamentally competent and possess the necessary intuitive sense of operational units and soldiers. Leaders must have a keen awareness of the world and the role of military force in the world. Future leaders must

have a broader understanding of war and the art of command. To reach these leader qualities, TRADOC PAM 525-5 defines six areas leader development must focus:

1. Future leaders must understand the changing nature of the legitimacy of command authority. Position and rank, along with accumulated and demonstrated wisdom and judgment, will still provide command authority, but authority gained through combat power capability and information dominance will, on the future battlefield, also define command authority.

2. Future leaders must have intuitive skills such as vision, innovation, adaptability, creativity, and the ability to simplify complexities and clarify ambiguities while operating under stress.

3. Future leaders must have a higher level of doctrine-based skills, knowledge, attitudes and experience to apply the battlefield operating systems to a wider range of complex contingency missions. The complex nature of future operations may require leaders of greater experience and rank commanding at lower levels.

4. The Army's leader development initiatives must provide development of individuals who demonstrate the potential for mastering the art of command. Institutional schools and self development programs, monitored by commanders, must train and develop leaders who are intuitive, agile-minded, innovative, and disciplined.

5. Leaders must be trained and developed under conditions that replicate projected operational environments which allow for changing conditions and increase difficulty.

6. Performance standards require leaders to rapidly grasp changes, independently plan, and execute doctrine-based actions.

The Force XXI company team will possess as much firepower and mobility as the battalion task force of today. Future leaders will require more experience, knowledge, and judgment at a lower rank than is required today to effectively employ the units of the future (Vandergriff 1997). The increased combat capability of future units call for an alignment of the rank of the commander with combat power rather than numbers of people.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to determine how OPMS XXI could be improved to ensure the best-qualified officer, one who is technically and tactically proficient at his grade and level of responsibility, commands company level operational units. Considering the system developed by OPMS XXI defined by DA PAM 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management* (October 1998), reviewing performance observations and trends, and reviewing past OPMS studies and associated literature, it can be concluded that fundamental adjustments to OPMS XXI will provide better-developed company-grade officers and meet the OPMS XXI endstate envisioned by the Army.

As stated in chapter 4, the Army's fundamental and most important purpose is to fight and win the nation's wars. The Army achieves this purpose, first, by ensuring it has trained and ready operational units capable of conducting sustained ground operations and second, by ensuring it constantly assesses the world environment in which it operates and adjusts to meet its demands today and in the future.

The purpose of the Army's OPMS is to develop officer leaders with the requisite skills, knowledge, and attributes to perform their role of keeping the U.S. Army the preeminent ground force of the world.

OPMS XXI is designed to meet this purpose by: first, providing the developmental training, knowledge, and experience officers require to effectively serve on the leadership teams within the operational force and second, by providing the

developmental systems to ensure the Army has trained officer specialist prepared to support and develop Army systems today and in the future.

For the most part, OPMS XXI is sound and will achieve these goals. The career field-based management system focuses field-grade officer development to ensure the Army is manned with trained and prepared field-grade specialists able to meet the needs of the operational force as well as the technologically advanced functional areas of the future.

Where OPMS XXI falls short is the field-grade developmental level focus of the career field-based management system and the deduction that operational unit readiness is tied primarily to the effectiveness of field-grade officers. The design of a personnel management and development system focused on reaching an intermediate objective--trained field-grade officers--and not the endstate--a trained officer corps--is fundamentally flawed. OPMS XXI correctly identified its purpose--provide trained and ready officer leaders for both the operational force and functional areas. It incorrectly identified the decisive point of this mission as the field-grade officer. The RETO study addresses this point when it states in its conclusion:

It is simply myopic to look upon education and training needs of a captain without considering what he learns on the job, what he may have learned as a lieutenant and what is expected of him as he advances to field grade rank. Nor is it appropriate to view resident schools as the only source of officer education and training, for the concepts of continuous learning, of seniors being responsible for the development of juniors, and of professional growth have always existed and should not be permitted to languish. Over-concentration on a particular rank or learning experience can lead to suboptimization. (*RETO* 1978, 1:II-2)

This conclusion is as valid today and for the twenty-first century as it was for the 1970s and 1980s.

OPMS XXI must focused on providing the Army's officer corps, as a whole, increased knowledge and experience in both operational and functional areas with emphasis always on warfighting tasks.

OPMS XXI focuses an officer's career life cycle on a critical pivotal point--selection for promotion to major and designation of a career field. At this point an officers is then focused on developing the skills, attributes, and knowledge to become a specialist in that field. The assumption made by OPMS XXI is that an officer, at this point in his career, is fundamentally grounded in the technical knowledge and the tactical experience of operational warfighting at the company and battalion level. An assumption made based on the three pillars of the Officer Development System--institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development. OPMS XXI, through its implementing document, DA PAM 600-3, October 1998, establishes the technical knowledge requirements in the form of common core tasks for institutional training. It further describes the progressive phases for institutional training--the Officer Basic Course, the Captains Career Course, which includes the Officer Advance Course and the Combined Arms Service Staff School. OPMS XXI establishes the tactical experience requirements through progressive and sequential operational assignments and describes a self-development pillar designed to support both the institutional and operational pillar.

What OPMS XXI does not establish are the standards or the level of required proficiency for each of these important developmental phases and supporting systems. OPMS XXI does not prescribe or discuss, within the OPMS XXI Task Force Study or through DA PAM 600-3, October 1998, a quantifiable, objective measurement tool to ensure an officer has gained the knowledge and skills required for progression to

positions of higher responsibility. Furthermore, OPMS XXI mentions, but does not encourage by providing detailed guidance, self-development, and there are no precise definitions of qualification in any specialty at any level, nor any guidelines for operational on-the-job learning. OPMS XXI does not account for the knowledge requirement of its company grade officers. DA PAM 350-58, Leader Development for America's Army, October 1994, a supporting and referenced document to DA PAM 600-3, October 1998, discusses and describes the three pillars of Officer Development in detail. It further identifies, but does not provide guidelines for, the Officer Foundation Standards (OFS) as the replacement for the Military Qualification Standards (MQS) nor does DA PAM 350-58 describe a system designed to ensure officers process a common foundation of knowledge on generic and branch specific tasks. Neither the OPMS XXI Task Force Study nor DA PAM 600-3, October 1998, references Officer Foundation Standards or Military Qualification Standards.

Additionally, the OPMS XXI Task Force Study incorrectly concluded the primary cause for poor operational readiness of units was the turbulent assignment policies for field-grade officers and that the field-grade officer leadership team is *the* key ingredient to effective operational units. Operational trends and observations suggest, and I conclude, a key factor of the Army's operational readiness is the proficiency of company level organizations and the direct leadership abilities of company commanders. Company size organizations are the basic, tactical building blocks for which all other organizations are formed. Analysis shows the ineffectiveness of company size elements--led by company grade officers--directly affect the operational performance of the higher units--led by field-grade officers. Based on this research, battalion level units are unable to

perform their warfighting tasks to the level expected by our doctrinal standards due to company level units failing to perform their warfighting tasks to the level expected. A logical deduction from this information would be that organizations trained and led by captains are also an integral part of the higher unit leadership team.

The analysis of this data points to two primary causes for poor company level effectiveness. First, company grade officers do not have the knowledge required to perform their tasks and, second, company grade officers do not have the experience required to apply this knowledge and execute the multitude of tasks required of them in a high paced, high stress, complex environment. The lack of knowledge accountability has been address. The lack of experience can be traced back, again, to a Career Field-based management system.

OPMS XXI is designed to provide the Army field-grade branch and functional area specialists. As such, the OPMS XXI officer life cycle model is designed to bring the an officer to the point in his career where he is selected for promotion for major and designated a career field so the Army can focus further development and provide the Army trained specialists. To reach this point, an officer must meet established requirements--he must be "branch qualified" as a company grade officer. DA PAM 600-3, October 1998, defines branch qualification for company grade officers as having attended the Officer Basic Course, the Captains Career Course, with its two components, and having successfully completed company level command. Additionally, research shows, the Army has a high number of branch/generalist and company grade functional area positions each with the requirement for the company grade officer to be "branch qualified"--having successfully completed company level command.

These two factors--the anticipation of reaching Career Field designation and the high demand for qualified company grade officers to fill branch/generalist and functional area positions--I conclude, place an detrimental demand for company grade officers to become "branch qualified." Which, in turn, forces company grade officers through the system before they are fully developed. Underdeveloped, inexperienced company grade officers rushing to complete "branch qualification," command the Army's companies, and contribute directly to the low warfighting readiness of operational units. OPMS XXI maintains "company command" as a step to be completed for "branch qualification" and the demand of the Army require this "step" be completed quickly to fill the company grade officer requirements placed on it by internal and external law and policy. I conclude this demand for "company command completed--branch qualified" officers to fill branch/generalist and functional area positions in the Army have a significant and degrading effect on the effectiveness of the Army's operational warfighting capabilities.

Recommendations

Knowledge Accountability

Reintroduce officer mandatory knowledge and skill requirements similar to previous Military Qualification Standards. Establish written standards that set forth the unambiguous requirements that must be met for qualification at each level of company grade officer development. Limit critical branch and generic skills to resident institutional training and develop written requirements and standards for each phase of Common Core tasks, unit administered operational tasks and individual self-development tasks.

Establish three levels of officer knowledge requirements which include military skills and knowledge and professional military education guidance:

Level I: Precommissioning Knowledge Requirements. The knowledge and skill requirements an officer must know when he enters Active Federal Commissioned Service (AFCS). Level I requirements include the military skills and knowledge requirements established by precommissioning Common Core tasks. The professional education requirements of a baccalaureate level education that provides the officer with a foundation upon which to develop judgement, knowledge and conceptual skills necessary to perform at higher levels of responsibility. Additionally, Level I standards should establish a requirement to complete undergraduate courses in human behavior, written communication skills, military history, national security policy and management. Level I requirements should be validated by a written examination prior to the officer entering the Basic Course.

Level II: Company Grade Basic Knowledge Requirements. Level II qualifies the officer in his specialty by providing the technical and tactical skills and knowledge found in the Basic Course Common Core tasks and continues the development of the qualities, abilities and knowledge introduced in Level I. Level II should be a logical follow-on to Level I and should be completed and validated by a written exam prior to the completion of an officer's third year of AFCS and attendance of the Captain Career Course. Level II military skill and knowledge tasks should include individual and collective specialty skills for the platoon and company level and directed by the officer's branch; administrative and logistical skills for platoon and company level; and organizational effectiveness and human relation skills for the platoon and company level organization.

The professional education component of Level II should focus on professional readings and discussions conducted during the officers first operational assignment, guided by established guidelines and standards, and administered by the officers field-grade chain of command.

Level III: Company Grade Advance Knowledge Requirements. Level III qualification should be two-fold. First, Level III should *qualify* the officer in his specialty at the intermediate level and, second, broaden an officer's professional development and prepare him for positions of higher responsibility. Level III should build on Level II requirements to produce an officer whom is qualified to serve in increasingly responsible staff positions and ultimately command at the company level. Level III military skills and knowledge requirements should begin at the Captains Career Course focused on the advance Common Core tasks. Build on Level II requirements and provide the officer a mix of individual and collective specialty skills for the battalion and brigade level; administrative and logistical skills for the battalion and brigade level; and organizational effectiveness and human relation skills. The exact mix of these tasks should be developed by each branch proponent, but focus the officer's development for duty on higher level staffs and, ultimately, company level command. The professional military education component should contain guidance on a directed reading and discussion program based on established guidelines conducted during the officer's second operational assignment and administered by the officer's field-grade chain of command.

A single source, Department of the Army pamphlet should be developed that outlines each level of officer knowledge requirements, responsibilities, timelines, validation procedures and standards. Additionally, each officer knowledge requirement

level should consist of a booklet and qualification card. The booklet should contain all tasks, conditions, and standards for each military skill and professional educational requirements. A booklet should be developed for each specific branch. Tasks standards should be criterion referenced and each booklet contain lists of applicable references for self-study and review. The qualification card should be constructed to show each task with a space provided for the supervising officer, instructor or company commander, and the validating officer, battalion commander or senior field-grade officer in the officer's chain of command, to indicate that the officer has satisfactory completed a task.

Records relating to qualification of individuals should be maintained locally under the supervision of the commander authorized to verify qualification – the battalion commander or the first field-grade officer in the individuals chain of command. Upon completion of a level of knowledge requirement (Level I, II, or III) a report is forwarded to the proponent branch manager of the individual officer notifying them of satisfactory or non-satisfactory completion. This notification *could* be added as a block check on the Officer Evaluation Report. Proponent branch managers should be notified to signify an officer is prepared to progress to the next level of officer development. An officer should not be allowed to begin the Basic Course until Level I is satisfactory completed. An officer should not be slated to attend the Captains Career Course until satisfactory completion of Level II requirements, and finally, an officer should not be allowed to assume command of a company level organization until Level III tasks have been satisfactory completed.

Redefining Company Grade Branch Qualification

Satisfactory completion of company level command should be removed from the definition of company grade "branch qualification." Branch/generalist and certain functional area company-grade officer requirements should be recoded to specify a "qualified" company grade officer rather than a company grade officer who has commanded a company.

A "qualified" officer should be defined as a company grade officer who has completed the Captain's Career Course, which includes the Officer Advance Course and the Combined Arms Service Staff School, and the Level II officer knowledge tasks associated with this level of development.

Company grade branch/generalist positions, such as basic training and recruiting company commands, TDA staff officer positions, ROTC and USMA instructor positions, and company grade AC/RC positions and certain functional area positions, should be filled with "qualified" company-grade officers. Operational unit staff officer positions at the division, brigade, and battalion level and command of operational company level commands should be reserved for officers who desire to pursue a career in the Operational Career Field.

Company level operational command is too vital a position for the warfighting readiness of the Army to degrade it to the status of a stepping stone used by officers to reach a position of "qualification." An officer's qualification should be based on established, quantifiable, and observable standards and the command of company level operational unit should be reserved for the officer who has demonstrated his ability in these standards and desires to pursue a career leading and training warfighting units.

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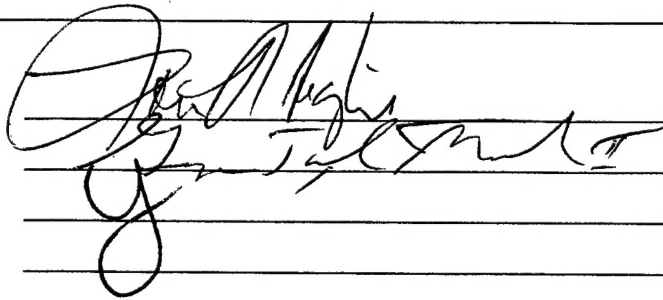
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